

"Dear Mr. President", Nashville, Tennessee, January or February 1942

AFS 6438A

Mrs. Ann Johnson: Dear Mr. President, I'm Mrs. Ann Johnson, a district chairman in the Civilian Defense Program of Nashville, and what I'm about to say may seem very personal. But unless there be concerted action on the part of each individual there can be no grand and glorious finale.

During the First World War, like all other patriotic mothers, having sons eligible for military duty, I threw myself unreservedly into every phase of wartime activity. Most eager to have a share in destroying every agency then at work to prevent the world from becoming a real democracy. As we failed in reaching our goal, today finds us involved in the most stupendous conflict the world has ever witnessed, as we all realize. It is of great pride that I say, my only grandson has not only volunteered his services, but today though miles and miles away from me, is doing active duty for his Uncle Sam.

My only son, a physician and surgeon with years of experience, upon a bed of affliction is striving with all of his might and main to hasten his recovery that he too may offer his services to his country.

What more can I say, but that I am here again. A grandmother then, a great grandmother now. After a quarter of a century of [services (?)] from active military combat, but striving against every other kind of handicap peculiar to my group lined up with the Civilian Defense Program in a very intimate way to do my bit. Having a hunch from a spiritual angle that when this ruinous war, these strikes and this bloodshed and discord cease and the most great peace shall come, that our children and our children's children will most assuredly find a new world that will evolve out of this present chaos. A saner and safer place in which to live.

Mabel McKee: My dear Mr. President, I am Mabel McKee one of the section leaders of the Negro block organization. We just completed our national registration and as a whole our group responded beautifully. For the six days of registration, our total being two hundred thirty-one. Of this number, to my opinion, the most patriotic citizen to register was Walter Wright, age forty-seven years, of 1044 Jefferson Street. This man was formerly a city employee, an unskilled laborer. He suffered a paralytic stroke three years ago rendering him unable to do manual labor. Each morning Mr. Wright would be the first person to meet the registers and he would remain at the station all during the day, generally standing at the door explaining to his fellow citizens the importance of registering and being a patriotic American citizen. He said that he was happy to be a doorkeeper. This, we considered, a wonderful tribute.



Our group of Negro women, as block leaders, pledge to our great United States our hearty support through this time of national crisis.